

R E M A R K S

Claims 1-2, 4, 5 and 7 are pending and stand ready for further action on the merits.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found in cancelled claim 6 and Figure 1.

The specification has been amended for clarity.

No new matter has been added by way of the above-amendment.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1, 2 and 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minami (EP 985,556). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As the MPEP directs, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. See MPEP § 2143.03.

As can be seen from a comparison between Figure 7 of Minami and the embodiment of Figure 1 of the present invention, Minami fails to teach or fairly suggest the following inventive limitations: (a) that the minimum thickness ( $W_{min}$ ) occurs between the radially outer end (FU) of the reinforcing cord layer and the radially outer end of the turned up portion; (b) the maximum thickness ( $W_{max}$ ) occurs near the radially outer end (BU) of the bead apex; and (c) that the length (LA) is 0.1 to 0.25 times the section height (H) of the tire. The two figures are reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience.

Fig.7

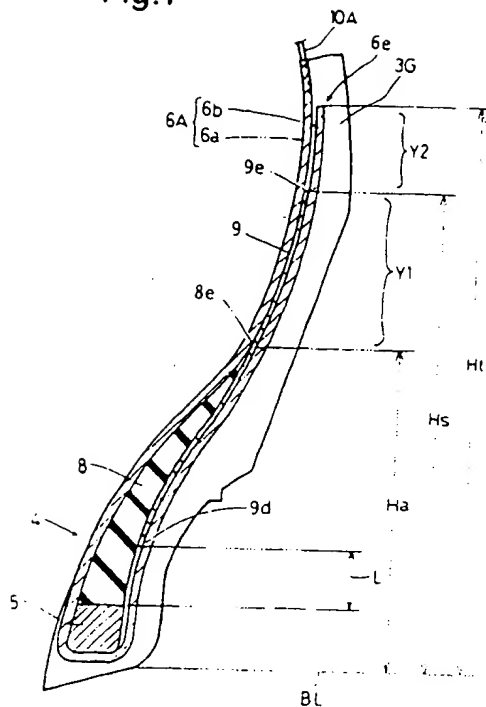
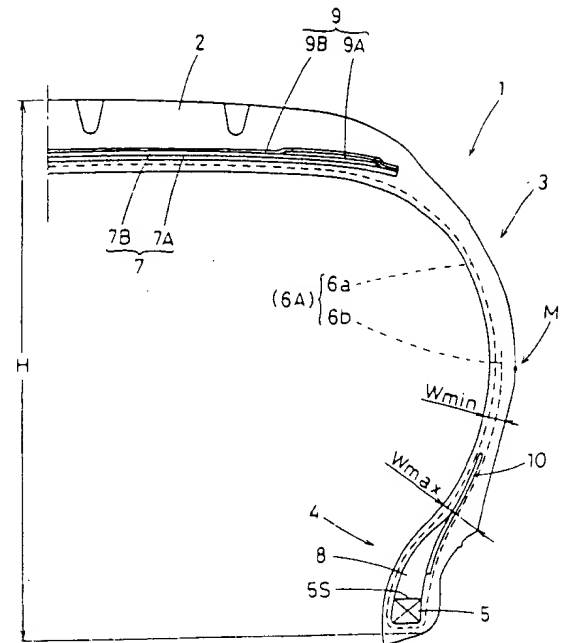


Fig.1



With regard to limitation (a), Figure 7 of Minami clearly shows that the minimum thickness of the sidewall portions lies radially outside the carcass ply turnup end 6e, which is apparently radially outside the maximum tire section width point. This is in distinction to the inventive tire wherein the minimum thickness ( $W_{min}$ ) occurs between the radially outer end (FU) of the reinforcing cord layer and the radially outer end of the turned up portion.

With regard to limitation (b), Figure 7 of Minami clearly shows that the maximum thickness ( $W_{max}$ ) of the tire of Minami is "near" the middle point of the bead apex, rather than the radially outer end thereof, as presently claimed.

With regard to limitation (c), the Examiner will note from Figure 7, as reproduced above, that the section height (H) of the tire is not clear, and as such, it is not possible to determine the length (LA) of the bead apex in relation to the section height (H). This is in distinction to the inventive tire wherein the length (LA) is 0.1 to 0.25 times the section height (H) of the tire.

As noted above, all claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Applicants respectfully submit that the inventive claims are patentable over Minami, since Minami fails to teach or fairly suggest: (a) that the minimum thickness ( $W_{min}$ ) occurs between the radially outer end (FU) of the reinforcing cord layer and the radially outer end of the turned up portion; (b) the maximum thickness ( $W_{max}$ ) occurs near the radially outer end (BU) of the bead apex; and (c) that the length (LA) is 0.1 to 0.25 times the section height (H) of the tire. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and comments, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance. However, should the Examiner find to the contrary, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enters this Reply into the official record to place the claims into better form for appeal.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant respectfully petitions for a three (3) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$950.00 is attached hereto.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning this application, he is requested to contact **Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., Esq.** (#43,575) at the offices of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP.


If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any


Serial No.: 09/923,386

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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